

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/903,685	CARMAN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	

Sean E Conley 1744

-- **The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendment filed January 9, 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 46-56.
3. The drawings filed on 13 July 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 46-56 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art fails to teach or disclose a method for biological burden reduction that includes the steps of first applying a continuous stream of O_x gas to a material in a biological burden reduction chamber, wherein the O_x gas comprises O₁, O₂ and O₃ and then applying a vacuum within the reduction chamber and simultaneously withdrawing the O_x gas.

The closest prior art to the applicant's claimed invention is Caputo et al. (U.S. 5,244,629) and Burleson (U.S. 4,640,782).

Burleson discloses a method for the generation and utilization of ozone and singlet oxygen. The apparatus comprises a means to convert O₂ into constituents of ozone (O₃) and singlet oxygen (O₁) and then pass the constituents to a treatment chamber and use the constituents to kill pathogens found on medical instruments and containers.

Caputo et al. disclose a plasma sterilization process that includes creating a vacuum inside of the treatment chamber and exposing an article to a plasma treatment.

However, neither of the above references, alone or combined, teach or fairly suggest a method for biological burden reduction that includes the steps of first applying a continuous stream of O_x gas to a material in a biological burden reduction chamber,

wherein the O_x gas comprises O₁, O₂ and O₃ and then applying a vacuum within the reduction chamber and simultaneously withdrawing the O_x gas.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sean Conley, whose telephone number is (571) 272-1273. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Robert Warden, can be reached at (571) 272-1281. The Unofficial fax phone number for this group is (703) 305-7719. The Official fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9310. The direct fax number to the examiner is (571) 273-1273.

When filing a FAX in Technology Center 1700, please indicate in the Header (upper right) "Official" for papers that are to be entered into the file, and "Unofficial" for draft documents and other communications with the PTO that are not for entry into the file of the application. This will expedite the processing of your papers.

Communications via Internet e-mail regarding this application, other than those under 35 U.S.C. 132 or which otherwise require a signature, may be used by the applicant and should be addressed to [robert.warden@uspto.gov]. All Internet e-mail

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communications will be made of record in the application file. PTO employees will not communicate with applicant via internet e-mail where sensitive data will be exchanged or where there exists a possibility that sensitive data could be identified unless there is of record express waiver of the confidentiality requirements under 35 U.S.C. 122 by the applicant. See the Interim Internet Usage Policy published by the Patent and Trademark Office Official Gazette on February 25, 1997 at 1195 OG 89.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the group receptionist, whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Sean E. Conley
Patent Examiner
AU 1744

SEC *A.C.J.*
March 26, 2004

Robert J. Warden, Sr.

ROBERT J. WARDEN, SR.
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700